

bring those bills forward if members of the minority cannot seek amendments which are nongermane or irrelevant.

We all know what Robert's Rules provide. Those are not the rules of the Senate, but we all understand why we have to have rules such as that, and that is to keep the process moving along so that we can do the important business we have to do.

I am very frustrated today, Mr. President. It is obvious because I do not ordinarily come to the floor, and I do not like to criticize in a partisan way. But people have to understand today or tomorrow we are probably going to begin the Memorial Day recess, which means there will be another 12 or 13 days of nonaction in the Senate, the net result of which will be we are way behind getting our business done, especially the appropriations bills to run the Government.

The danger is that there are not very many opportunities for us to get these bills done before the Senate has to adjourn for an election this year, and we will end up, instead of focusing on each of the appropriations bills, in turn having to put it all into one giant appropriations bill.

What happens when we do that? Every Member comes back to the Senate months later and says: I didn't know they put that in the bill. Nobody has a chance to read these giant omnibus bills. So we vote on bills we haven't even had an opportunity to read. Staff gets all kinds of things inserted. People on the inside get all kinds of things inserted in the legislation. We find out weeks later about the mistakes we have made. It is impossible to have a good, informed vote on a bill.

The other danger, of course, is that it is easier; that instead of resolving disputes and prioritizing spending, by offsetting this spending with this savings—for example, in those last days to put together these giant omnibus appropriations bill—you don't make those hard decisions; you just add more money. So you resolve the dispute by saying: we are taking care of you, and we are taking care of you. And pretty soon we have busted the budget. Most importantly, we may make the mistake of spending Social Security surplus money.

This past year, we did not spend a dime of Social Security surplus money. The previous year, we saved most of that Social Security surplus from being spent. Republicans, this year, are committed not to spending any of the Social Security surplus. But, unfortunately, I will make this prediction: If we get into this giant omnibus appropriations process at the end because we could not do our business during the weeks we have now to do that business, we are going to end up spending Social Security surplus money. I will never vote for such a bill. I think, therefore, we ought to be very careful about getting ourselves into that box.

Mr. President, I appreciate the opportunity to speak to this issue. I hope

people with goodwill can work it out, so when we come back from our recess, we can begin to get the people's business done and get it done on time. It is important for the future of this country.

#### CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

#### LEGISLATIVE BRANCH APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2001—Resumed

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2603) making appropriations for the legislative branch for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2001, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Mikulski Amendment No. 3166, to express the sense of the Senate commending the United States Capitol Police.

AMENDMENT NO. 3166

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There are 10 minutes available for debate on the pending amendment.

The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, yesterday I offered an amendment to the legislative branch appropriations bill commending the Capitol Police, and all the employees of the legislative branch, and recommending that we keep the Senate funding levels in conference.

I also complimented the outstanding leadership provided by Senator BENNETT, the Chair of the legislative appropriations subcommittee, as well as Senator FEINSTEIN, the ranking member of the subcommittee, who really moved this legislation in a way that I think meets the responsibilities we have to the American people.

The best way we can show our responsibility to the American people is to really let them know that the men and women who work at the U.S. Capitol are needed and valued.

My amendment is not about money, it is about morale. We want to say to the men and women who work at the U.S. Capitol that we know who you are and we value what you do. You are the men and women who work in this building for the American people. You serve the Nation.

The Capitol Police protect this building, which is a symbol of freedom and democracy the world over. The Capitol Police ensure that everyone who comes to the U.S. Capitol is safe and secure, including Members of Congress and staff.

The Capitol Police are brave. They are resourceful. They are tough. They are gallant. They protect you whether you are a foreign dignitary, such as Nelson Mandela, or a member of a Girl Scout troop from Maryland.

We need to make sure they have their jobs, they have their pay, they

have their pension, and they have our respect. That is what my amendment is all about: To support the Capitol Police and the other employees of the legislative branch.

I was deeply disturbed at the House bill which cut over 1,700 employees of the legislative branch. This isn't about bureaucracy. The people we are talking about are the 117 people from the Congressional Research Service. That is the body that is absolutely dedicated to giving us unbiased, unpolitical, accurate information so we can make the best decisions in our approach to forming public policy. We turn to them for models for the Older Americans Act and for ideas on new technology breakthroughs to be pursued. We have to make sure we have the Congressional Research Service and that they have the staff they need to do their job.

Also under the House bill, 700 jobs would be cut from GAO. Every Member of the Senate who is fiscally prudent knows we need the GAO. It is not about keeping the books, but it is about keeping the books straight. We continually turn to the GAO to do investigations of waste and abuse, to give us insights on how to better manage and be better stewards of the taxpayers' funds. People with those kinds of skills could leave us in a nanosecond and move to the private sector. They could be "dot.comers" with no hesitation.

If we are going to be on the broadband of the future, we need to make sure we have the skills to run a contemporary Congress. We need to make sure they have security in their jobs and security in health benefits and in their pensions. We need to be sure we let those workers know we are on their side.

In addition to that, we want to make sure we acknowledge the role our own staffs play in constituent service and in helping us craft legislation.

Two years ago, we all endured a very melancholy event here in the Congress. Two very brave and gallant police officers literally put themselves in the line of fire to protect us. Their names were Officer Chestnut, from Maryland—his wife still lives over there at Fort Washington—and Detective Gibson, of Virginia, father of three—teenagers, college students. We mourn them. We consoled their families and said a grateful Congress will never forget.

We should not forget the men and women who work here, but the way we remember is with the right pay, the right benefits, and the right respect.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I will just take about 2 minutes in support of the Mikulski amendment to say how proud I am to be an original cosponsor. I have probably given 15 or 20 speeches about this, so I do not want to take any time except to emphasize two points.